

## Jessie Bowe, Maldon

*Taken from a recent article published by the Tarrangower Times, written by Beth Knights, about a history walk that honoured Bill Woodful, Henry Handel Richardson and Jessie Bowe.*

...Lastly, it was a family affair as highly venerated Nurse Colonel Jessie Bowe was honoured by her niece Lesley Bowe, the spitting image of Jessie herself. Born at home in Maldon in 1906, Jessie attended Maldon Primary and, as was the norm, didn't attend secondary school. While assisting her mother with home duties, she also helped at the local hospital, where she developed a passionate interest in nursing. She went on to study in Melbourne and did further training to become a midwife.

A long and illustrious career in the Australian Army Nursing Service Reserve followed, and Jessie Bowe would go on to become a principal matron and matron-in-chief, earning the titles of Major, Lieutenant and finally Colonel. She served in places as far-flung as Egypt and Morotai Island and was awarded a Royal Red Cross, a Florence Nightingale medal and the United States of America's Bronze Star medal for her services.

To Leslie, she was Auntie Jessie, who loved to do tapestry to relax and owned a green Morris Minor. Never married, Auntie Jessie would take her nieces out for trips in the car while encouraging them to become nurses themselves.

Jessie died quite young after a battle with cancer and was given a televised State Funeral. Her medals have been donated to the Canberra War Memorial Museum, while the Jessie Bowe wing of the Maldon Hospital lives on.

